

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 26

By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of James Goforth of Erwin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of James Goforth; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, gifted with a fine intellect as well as an intense curiosity about things of the past, James Goforth's considerable contributions as a registered professional engineer were matched only by those he made to the study of East Tennessee history; and

WHEREAS, born in Asheville, North Carolina, James Goforth made his way to Kentucky to attend Berea College and the University of Kentucky, graduating from the latter with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering in 1939; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth began his lengthy career with the Clinchfield Railroad in 1943, making Erwin his home a year later; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth was named Chief Engineer for the Clinchfield Railroad in 1968, but he chose to resign that position in 1973 and take the post of City Engineer for Johnson City; and

WHEREAS, after his tenure as City Engineer and a subsequent stint in consulting, James Goforth returned to the Clinchfield Railroad in 1979, assuming the job of Chief Engineer again, a post he held until his retirement in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth sought to better the profession of engineering as a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Society of Professional Engineers, and as a charter member of the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers; and

WHEREAS, his particular expertise in railway engineering led Mr. Goforth to serve as National President of the American Railway Bridge and Building Association, chairman of the American Railway Engineering Association Tunnel Committee, and chairman of the Tennessee State Highway-Rail Committee; and

WHEREAS, as a historian, Mr. Goforth often combined his passion for historical research with his interest in railways and his love for East Tennessee, publishing a number of volumes including *Building the Clinchfield – A Construction History, Erwin, Tennessee: A Pictorial History, 1891-1929*, and *When Steam Ran the Clinchfield*; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his publications, James Goforth practiced the historian's craft as a charter member and President of the Clinchfield Historical Society and as an editor and historian for the Watauga Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Considered a member of the "Clinchfield Old Heads," Mr. Goforth was inducted into the Clinchfield Railroad Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth was appointed Historian for the Town of Erwin in 1999, and the East Tennessee Historical Society of Knoxville named him East Tennessee Historian of the Year in 2006, receiving an "Award of Distinction" from the Society as well; and

WHEREAS, James Goforth was listed in *Who's Who in Tennessee*, *Who's Who in the Southeast*, *Who's Who in Finance and Industry*, *Who's Who in Community Leaders*, and *Who's Who in Technology Today*; and

WHEREAS, a valued member of numerous civic organizations, James Goforth assumed the presidencies of both the Erwin Kiwanis Club and the Unicoi Ruritan Club; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated outdoorsman, Mr. Goforth served as President of the Unicoi County Rod and Gun Club and Director of the Tennessee Conservation League; and

WHEREAS, James Goforth was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Goforth was preceded in death by his first wife, Charline A. Goforth, and his second wife, Margaret Marie Goforth; and

WHEREAS, he will be sorely missed by his daughter, Elizabeth Horton; his sons, James A. Goforth and John L. Goforth; his five stepsons, Eddy, Dexter, Roger, Gary, and Scott Flanary; his five grandchildren; and his four great grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, James Goforth leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of James Goforth, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Goforth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.